

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 NEA-14 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 CIAE-00 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 MC-02 IGA-02 TRSE-00 AEC-11 DRC-01 /117 W

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R 241455Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6949

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

CNO WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 5952

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS

SUBJ: TUNISIAN FREIGHT FORWARDER FOR MILITARY

SPARE PARTS

1. (C) INFORMATION HAS JUST BEEN RECEIVED HERE THAT A&G VALCKE, THE FREIGHT FORWARDER ENGAGED BY GOT FOR SHIPMENT OF MILITARY SPARE PARTS HAS NOT, RPT NOT BEEN H FULFILLING HIS OBLIGATIONS. WE UNDERSTAND COMPANY HAS AN OFFICE IN PARIS AND OPERATES THROUGH A U.S. AGENT, OMNITRANS CORP. OF NEW YORK. NEITHER OF THESE FIROS SEEMS TO HAVE OBTAINED AN EXPORT LICENSE. CONSEQUENTLY, URGENTLY REQUIRED SPARE PARTS NEEDED TO MAINTAIN DER "PRES. BOURGUIBA" (EX USNS T.J. GARY) IN OPERATIONAL CONDITION ARE FRUSTRATED AT NEW YORK, AND TUNISIAN NAVY IS THREATENING SHUT-DOWN SHIP PERHAPS THIS WEEK.

2. (C) INFORMAL QUERIES BY CNO OFFICE TO TUNISIAN EMB WASHDC REPORTEDLY HAVE PRODUCED RESPONSE THAT TUNISIAN EMB FEELS THE MATTER IS A MILITARY MATTER OUTSIDE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES. WE NONETHELESS BELIEVE MATTER IS OF SUFFICIENT IMPORTANCE THAT TUNISIAN EMBASSY SHOULD BE INVOLVED. WE HAVE REPEATEDLY URGED TUNISIANS HERE TO CONFIDENTIAL

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RESOLVE PROBLEM AND INTEND ANOTHER, AND THIS TIME HIGH

LEVEL APPROACH, THIS WEEK. AS ADDITIONAL STEP, WE REQUEST DEPARTMENT CONTACT GOT AMB HEDDA AND SOLICIT HIS GOOD OFFICES IN HAVING A&G VALCKE PERFORM FREIGHT FORWARDER FUNCTIONS OR IN OBTAINING A NEW , RELIABLE FREIGHT FORWARDER. ONCE SHIP IS SHUT-DOWN, COST AND EFFORT PUT HER BACK IN OPERATING CONDITION MAY BE PROHIBITIVE.

3. (C) FYI CNO/OP63 IS ENDEAVORING TO FORWARD MATERIALS DIRECTLY, BYPASSING FREIGHT FORWARDER, ON AN INTERIM BASIS. CNO TUNISIAN NAVY HAS BEEN REQUESTED TO AUTHORIZE USN REPRESENTATIVE TO TAKE POSSESSION OF MATERIALS AOREADY DELIVERED TO OMNITRANS IN ORDER FOR USN TO FORWARD THESE MATERIALS. END FYI.

4. (C) WHETHER OR NOT HEDDA WILLING BECOME INVOLVED, EMBASSY WILL APPRECIATE DEPT'S ASSISTANCE IN EXPEDITING ISSUANCE OF EXPORT LICENSES FOR SPARE PARTS FOR "BOURGUIBA" ONCE REQUEST IS MADE.
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